OSWALD'S ALLEGED DISTRIBUTION OF FPCC MATERIAL, JUNE 16, 1963 (Preliminary Notes)

SYNOPSIS: The "HANDS OFF CUBA!" handbill pictured in CE 1412, purportedly obtained by the N.O. Harbor Police on or about June 16, 1963, is in fact a doctored version of one allegedly obtained from Oswald on August 9, 1963 by the N.O. Police Department.

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According to J. Edgar Hoover, "copies of the literature obtained by Patrolman Ray from the individual he believes to be Oswald are included in our memorandum of July 22, 1964." (CE 1412--22H803) Page 5 of that memo, as published in CE 1412, is a photograph of the same handbill depicted in CE 2966A. Oswald's name and Magazine St. address have been deleted, as have the initials of Martello and Secret Service agent Vial, and the date 11-23-63. The top of the handbill has been trimmed and the page number "5" added. The fact that these two exhibits originate from the same copy of the handbill can be verified from several marks on the paper; the unusual pattern of folds; and the right-hand hole and part of the "11" in the date, partially visible in CE 1412.

Hoover's letter to the Commission does not consider the question of whether the 2 handbills are identical, or identical except for name and address. With even more circumlocution than usual, he writes "In connection with the handbill made available by Patrolman Ray, entitled "HANDS OFF CUBA!" ... your attention is directed to the report ... regarding the handbill containing the same caption "HANDS OFF CUBA!" which was ordered by Lee Harvey Oswald ...." (22H803)

It is noted that a copy of the June 16 handbill was obtained by the FBI on July 21, 1964, and that the report incorporating it was sent to the Commission on August 4. The August 9 handbill was obtained by the Secret Service on November 23, 1963. A copy was sent to the Commission around May 21, 1964 (CD 975); the original was sent on September 15, 1964 (CE 2966). It also appears on page 409 of the Warren Report.

It is further noted that the Commission accepted, apparently without much question, Patrolman Ray's rather tentative identification of the leafleter as Oswald. He could not recall the man's name; if the handbill had a name on it, he apparently was not asked about it. (22H806) The handbill may have had one of the 4 stamped addresses depicted in CE's 115, 2966A, 2966B, and 3120 (p. 39); some other address, or none at all.

Potential leads:

CD 1370, from which CE 1412 is purportedly taken. (I have asked the Archives about this CD.)

CD 1034, on Martin Abelow. He apparently first brought the June 16 incident to the FBI's attention (on or about May 28, 1964); on July 9 the Commission requested the FBI to carry out the investigation. (!) (22H803)

SS 88 (in CD 87) and SS 1515 (in CD 975), mentioned in CE 2966, are probably not relevant.

The memo in CD 1495 (accompanying CE 3120) should be checked. Was this "544 Camp St." pamphlet the subject of a separate memo? If so, why?

FBI exhibits 97, 300, 335, 414, B7, B22, D25, D108*, D234* are FPCC handbills. (Federal Register, 11/1/66)

Paul L. Hoch
November 9, 1967

Tom - you may keep this.